

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) Test element analysis system for the analytical investigation of liquid samples, comprising:

test elements with a test field, which for performing an analysis is brought into contact with the sample, the reaction of an analyte contained in the sample with at least one reagent contained in the test element leading to a change of a measurable variable which is characteristic for the analysis, and

a test element storage container, where a plurality of test elements are stored to be taken out of the storage container at a take out position, and

an evaluation instrument with a test element ~~transport-gripping~~ device and a measuring device, the ~~transport-gripping device~~ provided for positioning a test element in a sample application position, such that its test field is brought into contact with the sample, the measuring device being for measuring a change of a measurable variable which is characteristic for the analysis,

wherein

the test elements comprise a frame at least partially surrounding the substantially planar test field and including an outwardly oriented gripping rim running around the outer perimeter of the test elements, the frame having a diameter that increases from the gripping rim in both spatial directions running perpendicular to the test field plane, ~~and the system includes a gripping device, which during the taking out from the storage container,~~ holds a test element at its gripping rim.

12. (Original) Test element analysis system according to claim 11, wherein the gripping device is a part of the evaluation instrument, and wherein the test element is taken over directly from the take out position of the storage container to the evaluation unit.

13. (Original) Test element analysis system according to claim 11, the gripping device comprises a plurality of gripping arms, which are during the holding of the test element in at least point contact with the gripping rim of the test element.

14. (Withdrawn) Test element analysis system according to claim 13, wherein the arms of the gripping device are elastically moveable in such a manner that due to this elasticity they can be pushed onto the test element for holding thereof.

15. (Withdrawn) Test element analysis system according to claim 14, wherein the arms of the gripping device are part of a gripping element, which is made of a single piece of an elastically deformable material.

16. (Withdrawn) Test element analysis system according to claim 11, wherein the test element storage container comprises a magazine where the test elements are stored in a stack one upon the other.

17. (Original) Test element analysis system according to claim 12, wherein the gripping device is embodied as a gripping fork with two gripping arms, and wherein the test element is held, by means of gripping sections of the arms of the gripping fork, the gripping sections running parallel to the test field plane and being in at least point contact with the gripping rim.

18. (Previously Presented) Test element analysis system according to claim 17, wherein the distance between the arms of the gripping fork decreases towards a front end of the gripping section.

19. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) Test element analysis system according to claim 17, wherein the ~~transport device~~ system is embodied in such a manner that one test element at a time is taken out from the test element storage container by means of a one-dimensional translatory motion of the gripping fork.

20. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) Test element analysis system according to claim 17, wherein the ~~transport device~~ system is embodied in such a manner that the test element is transported, during at least a part of the transport path between the take out position and

the sample application position, by means of a swiveling movement of the gripping fork around a fixed axis which runs vertical to the test field plane.

21-37. (Cancelled)

38. (Currently Amended) Test element storage container containing test elements with a frame at least partially surrounding the test field,

wherein the frame comprises a substantially circular outwardly oriented gripping rim at an outer perimeter thereof formed and arranged in such a manner that the test element can be held at the gripping rim by means of a gripping device, the frame having a diameter that increases from the gripping rim in both spatial directions running perpendicular to a plane defined by the frame.

39. (Original) Test element storage container according to claim 38 comprising a magazine where the test elements are stored in a stack one upon the other.

40. (Previously Presented) Test element storage container according to claim 39 wherein the magazine is tube-shaped and comprises a take out slot arranged parallel to the test field plane of test elements contained therein, the slot having a height greater than the thickness of a test element and less than twice the thickness of a test element-whereby one test element at a time can be taken out of the magazine through the take out slot by means of a gripping device.

41. (Cancelled)

42. (Previously Presented) Test element storage container according to claim 38 containing test elements having a substantially planar test field and having a cross sectional profile such that a plurality of test elements stacked ~~on~~ upon the other can slide upon another in a direction parallel to the substantially planar test field without interlocking.

43. (Original) Test element storage container according to claim 38 containing test elements with a frame the diameter of which increases from the gripping rim in a spatial direction vertical to the test field plans, forming a protruding shoulder.